# Yogoda

## SELF-REALIZATION magazine

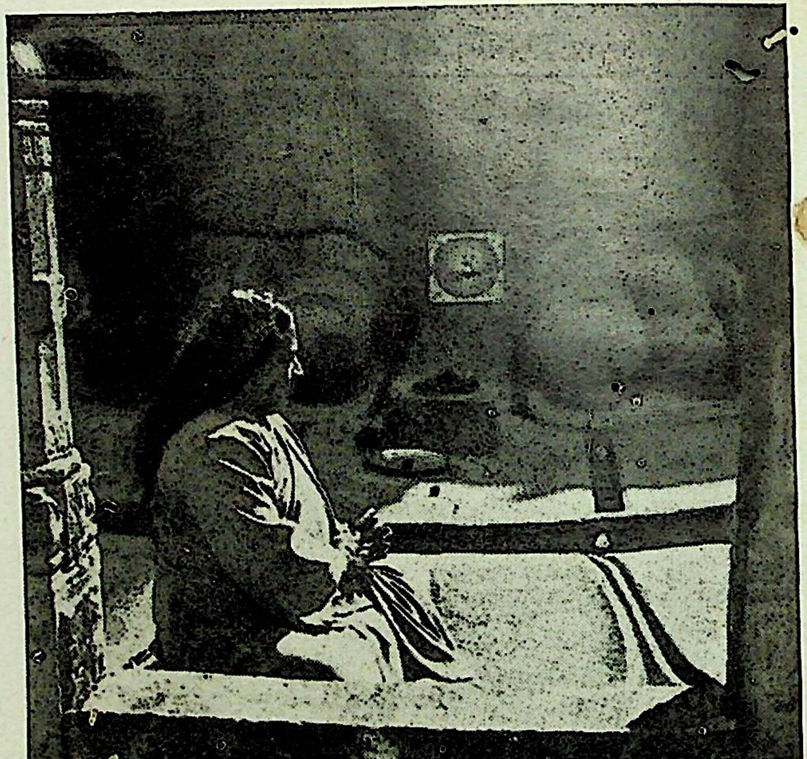
FOUNDED BY SRI SRI PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Sri Sri Daya Mataji, Sangha Mata and President of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India

MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO HEALING OF BODY, MIND, AND SOUL

January-March 1972

Rs.1.25



Sri Sri Paramahansa Yoganandaji at Giri Hill, Sravana, Belgola in 1935

# YOGODA
## *SELF-REALIZATION MAGAZINE*
*Organ of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India*
*FOUNDED BY SRI SRI PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA*

Vol. XXIII, No. 1 1972 January-March

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**Yogoda Satsanga Society of India**

SRI SRI PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA SRI SRI DAYA MATA
*Founder* *President*

Printed at Yogoda Satsanga Press and published quarterly from Yogoda Math, Dakshineswar, Calcutta-57, West Bengal (India) by Sri Indranath Seth, B. L. for Yogoda Satsanga Society of India.

Sri Prabhas Chandra Ghosh, *Editor*

*Subscription, domestic;* Rs. 5.00 for one year; Rs. 9.00 for two years; Rs.12.50 for three years; (after which Rs.10.50 for every additional three years). Issued quarterly. Single copy: Rs. 1.25. *Subscription outside India*: Rs. 10.00 and Rs. 25.00 for one, and three years respectively.

# SRI SRI PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, 1893-1952, was one of the truly great masters that, since time immemorial, have been India's principal glory. His mission on earth was spiritually to unite East and West by teaching scientific meditational techniques that lead to God-communion. He was practical; the balance he expressed in his life and teachings was an inspiration for all peoples.

Sent to America in 1920 by his guru, Swami Sriyukteswar Giri of Bengal, Sri Yoganandaji remained in the West for over thirty years. There he initiated more than one lakh (1,00,000) of persons into the ancient science of Kriya Yoga (the principal technique of the path of Raja Yoga). He founded centres throughout the world, and inspired numerous disciples from many lands to dedicate their lives to his mission as monks and nuns.

Since his mahasamadhi in 1952 his cause has continued its phenomenal rate of growth. In India also, ever increasing thousands have been attracted by the dynamic vigour, practicality, devotion, and wisdom of his message.

The society founded by him is known as YOGODA SATSANGA SOCIETY OF INDIA with headquarters at Yogoda Math, Dakshineswar, Calcutta-57. This Society publishes his books and distributes his lessons in Self-Realization to students all over India from the distributing centre at Yogoda Sakha Math, Ranchi. In addition, Yogoda institutions carry on various charitable and humanitarian activities.

Sri Yoganandaji's books may be purchased at or ordered through any book store in India, or from the publishers:

*YOGODA SATSANGA SOCIETY OF INDIA*
Yogoda Sakha Math
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OLD HAZARIBAGH ROAD
Ranchi – 1, Bihar

# If You Want His Answer

By Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

Whether He replies or not
Keep calling Him—
Ever calling in the chamber
Of continuous prayer.

Whether He comes or not,
Believe He is ever approaching
Nearer to you
With each command of your heart's love.

Whether He answers or not,
Keep entreating Him.
Even if He makes no reply
In the way you expect,
Ever know that in some subtle way
He will respond.

In the darkness of your deepest prayers,
Know that with you He is playing
Hide-and-seek.

And in the midst of the dance of life,
disease, and death,
If you keep calling Him,
Undepressed by His seeming silence,
You will receive His answer.

# The Infinite Nature of God

By Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

*A talk at Self-Realization Fellowship/Yogoda Satsanga Society of India international headquarters on Thursday evening, January, 28, 1937*

The Hindu scriptures state that God is beyond comprehension by mind and intellect. Powerful as they are, their scope is insufficient to contain Him. So the human mind is incapable of true conception of God. The question "Who made God?" arises only because mind cannot comprehend That which has neither beginning nor end.

When you are looking at the sun millions of miles away in the sky, that huge luminary seems smaller by far than our earth. Yet the diameter of earth is roughly 7,900 miles; and the sun is more than a hundred times that wide. If you could place our planet next to the sun, earth would appear by comparison a tiny dot. Let us suppose the giant solar orb is expanding, growing more and more huge, until the vast blue of the sky is entirely swallowed up by its mass. The space thus filled is nevertheless but a particle, a mere speck, of the space that spreads through countless universes and into infinity. Were the sun to go on endlessly enlarging in space, still it would not be able to take the measure of infinity. The cosmic delusion of finitude prevents the mind from conceiving such vastness. Where are its boundaries? Whence came this endless void? The Originless Immeasurable is God. Omnipresent in the farthest reaches of space, He is in the distant stars, and in you and me; and He is conscious every moment of every place He is.

God is not mind—He created it and He is beyond it. Otherwise we could conceive Him in our minds. We can accurately call Him Divine Consciousness, Divine Joy, Divine Existence, but not mind.

Though mind is incapable of encompassing Omnipresence, it is nevertheless able to *feel* God. Feeling His presence and measuring it are two different experiences. The wave cannot measure the ocean, but there is a point of contact between them. So where the Infinite becomes the finite there is a point of contact: the superconscious mind. That mind can feel God. When we expand the ordinary mind until it impinges on the superconscious mind, we are able to feel His presence.

## We Have Descended from the Infinite into the Finite

We have descended from the Infinite into the finite. Yoga is withdrawal of the attention from externals in order to focus it on the inner source of Truth. Only in this way can we discover how God has condensed His consciousness into the multitudinous finite forms of His creatures and the universes they inhabit. The human body is the most intricate of all His creations. A single original cell, the united sperm and ovum, divides; and by multiplication of the process builds up infinite numbers of cells around itself to create the bodily temple that houses our divine soul consciousness.

You don't realize how much energy is locked in even one little gram of flesh. Its release would spread countless electrons far into space.* And the power and extent of the consciousness that is present in the body is beyond human conception. Though externally we are made of flesh, behind its gross cells are electrical currents, life currents. And behind these subtle energies are the thoughts and perceptions, an infinite number of thoughts.

Thought is inexhaustible. Since the world began, thoughts in unimaginable numbers have passed through the ether. One could not begin to count them, but it is possible to get some idea if you reflect on how many thoughts and feelings you express during your own lifetime. Millions! Try to remember all you have thought in just one year, or even in one day. Consider the accumulation of thoughts of every human being through unrecorded ages past. God knows them all!

Mind cannot measure even the subtle phenomena of nature. How many protons and electrons whirl in the electricity that flows into the light bulbs here in the chapel? Trillions, dancing together, make this light you behold. These ultramicroscopic particles travel so fast, they can cover the distance from here to New York, or to any other part of the world, instantly. Scientific experiments are proving this.

If you try to calculate how many protons and electrons are condensed in our earth, the mind goes only so far and then stops. What is revealed to the searching mind seems infinite but there is a point beyond which ideas become too subtle to follow. From that sphere where the mind cannot penetrate, God is pouring forth His essential Light—the Cosmic Intelligent Vibration that structures finite creation.

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*The awesome power of the release of nuclear energy was first demonstrated under controlled conditions within a few years of this talk, when the first atomic bomb was exploded at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945.

## God's True Nature Known Only Through Intuition

If we use the mind properly, we can understand how God is beyond mind and intellect; and how His true nature can be felt only through the power of intuition. We must find His consciousness through the superconscious mind—the nucleus of mind and intelligence. His infinite nature is revealed to man through the intuitive superconsciousness. The joy felt in meditation reveals the presence of Eternal Joy spead over all creation. The light seen in meditation is the astral light from which our tangible creation is made. Beholding this light, one feels a unity with all things.

The ordinary person lives in the world but is relatively unconscious of its nature and purpose. A life of such limited perception is not unlike that of the animals. A goat that we used to have here at Mount Washington was always attracted to my voice. One day, while I was speaking in this chapel, it came trotting in and right on up the aisle to me! I am sure the goat didn't know what I was saying, but it had been drawn by my voice. You come to these lectures not just to listen to the words but to feel God's presence. If you attune your consciousness with His consciousness, and remain in that current of bliss, you will feel at-onement with Him. Whatever understanding I have attained has been acquired by becoming attuned to God's consciousness within. This you too can accomplish.

As one develops spiritually and realizes his kinship with all that lives, his responsibility to share the suffering of others increases. Even as Jesus suffered in sharing the afflictions of others, so must we do our part for those who are shivering with cold and disease. It is a nightmare for them; and whatever of their woes we can remove, we are removing them from God also. He is not happy when His children are in misery, for He suffers in them.

At this moment most of you are enjoying beauty and peace, but think of those in Louisville today! Thousands are suffering there because of the floods. Once long ago I was thinking how wonderful America is, without the disasters that afflict so many countries; then God showed me the floods that are occurring now. The vibrations of the thoughts and feelings of thousands being killed in the fighting in Spain have caused atmospheric changes that are responsible for these floods and other disasters around the world. War spews out vibrations of wrong that throw all nature out of balance and harmony, causing "natural" catastrophes.

God gave freedom to man, and man has misused that freedom; this is the cause of all suffering. The misuse of our God-given free will has terrifying consequences. I would rather someone tell me when I am about to do wrong than allow me to wake up years later and see the harm I had done.

### Satan Created Ignorance, Cause of All Suffering

Suffering is therefore not the work of God, but of Satan (or *Maya*, delusion.) This force created the ignorance that blinds people to the consequences of their actions, causing them to err and thus bring suffering upon themselves. Those who are fighting in Spain—both the government forces and their opponents—think they are trying to do right. The only way to avoid error is to develop the discriminative wisdom to know what is wrong and then resolve not to do it. One wrong fighting another wrong doesn't make a right. The true enemy of man is ignorance. It must be driven from this earth.

We have everything necessary in the world today to bring about the millennium. Only man's selfishness makes it impossible. Tremendous unnecessary suffering is created by man's short-sighted self-interest. Money that could feed and clothe needy people is used instead for destruction. The root cause of the world's troubles is this selfishness born of ignorance. Each person thinks he is doing right; but when he seeks to satisfy only his own interest, he is setting in motion the karmic law of cause and effect that will destroy his own and others' happiness.

The more I see of world tragedies caused by man's ignorance, the more I realize that even if every street were paved with gold, happiness would not be lasting. Happiness lies in making others happy, in forsaking self-interest to bring joy to others. If each one would do that, then everyone would be happy; and all would be taken care of. That is what Jesus meant when he said: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."*

A federation of all religions and all nations is necessary. But such a union will come only when every individual engages in that meditation which leads to direct contact with God. Communion with Him is the solution. When one has realized God, he no longer feels that others are different from himself. Unless such wisdom comes, not to just a few, but to all men, there will be no freedom on earth.

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*Matthew 7:12.*

Even here in America freedom is not total; suffering still abounds. Each one of us has a responsibility to bring peace and happiness to our country and to all men. One should care, not only for his own nation, but for all countries; not only for one's own family, but for all mankind. The ordinary man's interest is limited to himself and his surroundings, but the man of God identifies with the whole world. Don't think the contribution made by your spiritualized consciousness is small. Your part may mean very much.

In order to know God you must become like Him. In spite of our transgressions, in spite of our forgetfulness of and great indifference to Him, still He lovingly gives us life and all that supports life in this world. Nothing is greater than God; indifference to Him is the highest sin.

Those who are not willing to give up all they have to find Him, will not know Him. Whoever would know God must be able to forsake all else for Him. Jesus was trying to make his disciples understand this truth when he told them to keep watch and pray with him at Gethsemane. But when they fell asleep, he sadly observed: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Man is like a puppet. The strings of his habits, emotions, passions, and senses make him dance to their bidding. They bind his soul. He who is unwilling or unable to cut himself free in order to know God will not find Him. I see myself apart from these attachments. I eat, and sometimes I don't eat; I sleep, and sometimes I don't sleep. I gave up all physical necessities to prove to myself that I do not need them. God doesn't eat or sleep; He isn't bound by senses and habits. That is what makes Him God; and we are made in His image. We should be able to give up

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**Matthew 26:41.*

everything to know Him: "Seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."* Despite all the tests I have gone through for Him, in the end God has given me everything I wanted or needed of this world. And I have given it all back, for He has bestowed on me a gift infinitely greater: Divine Joy, day and night. In that Joy all desires that come into my heart are satisfied.

## Meditation Lifts the Fog of Ignorance

In the Bhagavad-Gita, recorded by Sage Vyasa, Lord Krishna explains that if your innate wisdom is covered over with ignorance, you are deluded and thus stumble through life. When the fog of ignorance is removed by meditation you will see the right path. You will be troubled no more; you will find fulfillment eternal.

These truths are all real to me. Truth is Reality. Self-realization is not something one can learn from books; it comes only through personal experience. Realization of truth, experience of God—not dogma merely—is what every religion should bring to its followers. What Jesus Christ realized, we too must experience. He didn't teach that we should worship him as a personality, but rather that we should experience what he experienced in his oneness with God. That can be attained only by meditation and by following God's laws. To worship Jesus because he is Jesus is not enough. We must embrace the universal ideas he taught, and strive to be like him.

We are here on earth in this particular body-form for just a little while, to learn our lessons and move on. Whither are we headed now? Think how many pages of the Lord's dream novel of creation have already been turned!

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**Luke 12:31.*

When I visited Salt Lake City I saw in vision a great ocean, and mammoths walking on the shore. Later I learned that the skeleton of an ancient mammoth had recently been found there.

As human beings we have God-given power to cast away every habit and limitation and spread our consciousness throughout creation, penetrating not only the hearts of all creatures, but reaching out beyond the stars. Our native vastness encompasses even greater space. Such tremendous possibility lies within us! We are infinite! I live in that sphere of infinity, and am conscious of the body only once in a while.

You are limited now; but when by deep, daily meditation you become able to transfer your consciousness from the finite to the Infinite, you will be free. You are not meant to be a prisoner of the body. You are a child of God; you must live up to that divine birthright. That is why Jesus said: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off."*

### Give God First Place in Your Heart

Wherever your mind is, that is where you will spend your time. What if God had not given you the power to play or read or work? You could do nothing. So He should come first in your life. God knows what is in your heart; give Him first place there.

The only way to catch God is by love. Meditate upon Him, and then deeply pray: "Lord, I cannot live without You. You are the Power behind my consciousness. I love You. Reveal Yourself to me." When you give up sleep to meditate upon Him, when you forsake selfishness and cry because of His suffering in your brothers, He comes to you.

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**Mark 9:43.*

When you actually sacrifice for Him, He is caught in the net of your love. Nothing else can capture Him.

Knowledge prepares the way to love. You cannot love that which you do not know. Knowledge of God must therefore precede love for Him. That knowledge comes by practice of the technique that Lahiri Mahasaya gave, *Kriya Yoga.** When you know God, you will love Him; you will surrender yourself to him.

Until your devotion for God and awareness of Him become complete, don't rest; don't give in to sleep when you should be meditating. Never give anything preference before God! His love is the greatest love there is. So long as you let other things come first, He will wait. But your delay may be too long, and your suffering may be great. Don't procrastinate. Be certain in the sincerity of your conscience that you have made the effort to commune with Him. Don't rest, don't give up until you can see Him with your own eyes, or feel Him in your heart. Birth, play, marriage, children, old age—life is finished. That is not living! Life is much deeper and more wonderful than that, I have found. When you know God, there is no more sorrow. All those you loved and lost in death are with you again in the Eternal Life. You don't know whom to consider your "own" anymore, because everyone is yours.

The beauty of God is vast. To enjoy flowers for their loveliness is good, but far greater is to see behind their purity and beauty the face of God. To be carried away by music for its own sake cannot compare with hearing God's creative Voice in it. Though God is immanent in the finite beauties of creation, it is wisdom to realize one's eternal Self beyond form and finitude. You know how fond I am of our grounds at the Mount Washington and Encinitas ashramas. I never tire of their beauty. But the Lord gave me an awakening experience recently. I inwardly saw people sitting about and talking. One of them proposed some activity, but another said, "No, Paramahansaji taught that we must not do that." I suddenly realized that this was a vision of years to come, after I was no longer here in this body. For a moment I was shaken; then I came back to ordinary consciousness.

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**Kriya Yoga* means union *(yoga)* with the Infinite through a certain action or rite *(kriya)*. Specifically, it is a meditation technique through which the divine union can be realized. (See *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Jaico Ed. p. 248.)

There is no use in becoming attached to anything in this world. So many things come and go in the Lord's cosmic drama. I see airfields destroyed, and the sea filled with dead, and many other things to come. In my heart I see a world without me. That freedom God gives ultimately to every soul.

One great saint said, "I care not where I may be, O Lord, but punish me not with obliviousness of Thee." There is no greater punishment. That is why Jesus said: "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed."* All suffering can be taken away by the contact of God.

### Awake from the Nightmare of Suffering

In a dream you may see yourself running down a street, pursued by an enemy. Suddenly you are shot, and you think, "Oh, how terrible! I am dying! I am sad to leave this world." Then you see yourself dead. The undertaker cremates your body, and your friends come to mourn when the ashes are laid away. But suddenly you wake up and see that it was only a dream. You are alive! This is similar to what happens at death.

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*Mark 9-43.

God showed me in a vision that those who are dying in the fighting in Spain are only dreaming a terrible dream of death. As soon as their consciousness is lifted from the body, they awake as from a nightmare, and are glad to be free of it. Our life experiences are all part of a dream. Man himself has created the nightmare of war. But after its victims have been thrown from their bodies, they realize it was only a nightmare from which they have awakened. They know they are not dead. This is a great metaphysical truth.

It you know you are dreaming, you don't suffer from your bad experiences in the dream. But if you are identified with the dream, and in it someone strikes your head and kills you, that dream death seems a true and terrible experience until you wake up and understand it was not real. It is the same after death. Once you are out of this body, you realize you are not dead; you are free of a nightmare. So death is not the end; it is a freeing of the consciousness from imprisonment in the physical-dream body. That release brings a sense of great freedom. We should never seek death. Rather, we should prepare our consciousness by meditation and God communion, so that when death comes, in its own time, we are able to look upon it as a dream, nothing more. I can see the dream nature of life and death anytime I wish. Hence I attach little importance to this body.

## In Oneness with God Know That Life Is a Dream

Live in the consciousness of Spirit, in that oneness with God wherein you know that life is a dream. It is very easy to do when you make the effort. When suffering comes it is more difficult to detach your consciousness from identification with the body; so be wise and make the effort now, while you have strength and health.

Material desires take away the desire for the Infinite. Every day or so someone tells me I need this or that. It seems ridiculous, because I know that thousands do not have what I am told I "need." If they don't need it, why should I? Your only real need is God; there is no other necessity. Be not attached to possessions, music, books, food, or any other sense pleasures. In God you have eternal life. Become aware of this great truth; otherwise your appointments in life will take over, and you will die still bound by them. If you are one with Him, you are not compelled to return to this dream earth again. You are free to come and go as you like, to serve God in His children on earth.

If you live in the joy of God, you will not know what death is. You do not get to that state when you pray mechanically. Become completely absorbed in your prayer, with faith that God is listening. If you thus fervently, lovingly pray to God, He will come to you at any time.

# Understanding One Another

BY SRI SRI DAYA MATA

*Based on extracts from a talk on December 14, 1965*

We should behave always according to our true nature as divine children of God. No matter what others do to hurt us, we ought to return forgiveness and compassion. We have the power to change others' feelings toward us if we practice that. With heartfelt sincerity the hand of love and friendship should be offered to all. If the hand is slapped, or as often as it is slapped, it should be proffered again.

Receive praise or blame without becoming excited about either. Though at times it may be difficult to cope with persons who are critical of us, we should not ignore what they say, if it is constructive. Sometimes it is all right to try to explain ourselves; on other occasions it is a waste of time to go into long explanations, which may sound only like justifications. In such instances we are wiser merely to accept silently. In other instances, every effort should be made to come to an understanding.

The best attitude is that divine humility referred to by St. Francis of Assisi when he said, "Accept blame, criticism, and accusation silently and without retaliation, even though untrue and unjustified." Even if what is said about us is untrue, even if we feel it is unjustified, we are spiritually ennobled when we accept it without argument and without retaliation. Leave the decision to God. One who would know God must strive first to please Him, not man.

The time to explain, the time to remain silent, depends upon the circumstances. But there is never a time to retaliate, under any circumstances. Always let God be the judge. His laws are just, so in the highest sense we need never defend ourselves.

There will be those who praise and understand us; there will be those who blame and misunderstand. We should take both in our stride. Our part is to strive always to the best of our ability to live by truth. When we realize we have made a mistake, we should instantly ask the Divine to forgive us; and then correct ourselves.

It is no use trying to hide our errors from God; He knows them anyway. We can trustingly tell Him all our mistakes and seek His help in righting them. God's immanence makes Him a constant, divine companion with whom we can freely share our feelings. He sees us as we are. How can we feel egotistical about ourselves when we know we are nothing without Him? Once we realize this, there begins within us a persistent struggle to reach perfection in His eyes. He who is satisfied with himself ceases to grow spiritually. Egoistic self-satisfaction is a grave sin against the higher Self. Whosoever ceases to strive for improvement shrinks in spiritual stature.

Anytime we are wrong, let's admit it. Let us not always think we have to be right. This is not being honest with ourselves. The fact that we believe a certain way does not necessarily make it right. If someone shows us we are wrong, we should be willing and ready to change.

This is the way we grow and acquire understanding. Long explanations of why we erred are unnecessary. We need simply say, "I am very sorry. I didn't understand it that way."

### If There Is No Communication, Misunderstanding Grows

When a person misunderstands us, and is angry, nothing we can say will in any way enlighten him while he is under the influence of emotion. It is best to wait until our would-be antagonist is calm, and then endeavor to communicate. When people cease to communicate with one another, misunderstanding grows. So long as there is communication—not argumentation, but openminded discussion—there is hope for cultivating understanding and harmony.

It is important never to have a closed mind. This Gurudeva (Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda) would not tolerate in those who sought his training. Whoever wished to be around him had to keep openminded, to be a reasonable human being.

In trying to communicate with others, we should always watch our motives. If under the guise of seeking understanding our real intent is to thrust our own ideas down their throats, our motive is impure, and hence wrong. We should always sincerely attempt to understand others, setting aside momentarily our own viewpoint to identify with the other person's thinking. We have to do this if we are to communicate successfully with others. If we are seeking truth, not mere justification of our own convictions, we must be able to let go, for the moment, of what we feel is right, and see the matter through the other person's eyes. Let him express himself. Then, having heard his side, and having impartially analyzed it from his viewpoint, we may present our side. In other words, there must be a fair exchange of ideas. Both parties may then see that they have erred in their thinking and that truth lies somewhere between their opposite stands.

## It Is Our Duty to Defend Divine Principles

One trouble with most of us is that we are so busy putting across our own point and trying to convince the other party of it, we don't give him a chance to air his view. When you have difficulties with someone, always give him sufficient respect by allowing him to "get it off his chest." No matter how vicious he is, no matter how emotional, don't interrupt. Let him have his say. Then respond quietly and kindly. Even though he might be saying the most unkind things about you, listen respectfully while inwardly saying to God, "Is this so? I am interested in the truth. If I am this way, You must help me, Lord, to overcome my fault and change myself." But should the person be abusive to the point of forgetting himself, and offend spiritual principles, not mere personal pride and ego, it is our duty to resist, to become like steel. To offend divine principles is to offend God, and we must never be a party to that. Jesus never defended himself, but he was strong in word and deed when righteousness was abused.

Our duty as children of God in this world, then, is to seek understanding: understanding of self, of others, of life, and, above all, of God. This world can be a better place only when understanding reigns in the heart and mind of man. Individuals must learn to get along with one another before nations can ever hope to.

# The Godson

### By Leo Tolstoy

*In this entertaining story Tolstoy presents a theme dear to his heart—that evil cannot be overcome by evil but only by good. This folk-tale, translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude, was written by Tolstoy in 1886.*

A son was born to a poor peasant. He was glad, and went to his neighbor to ask him to stand godfather to the boy. The neighbor refused—he did not like standing godfather to a poor man's child. The peasant asked another neighbor, but he too refused, and after that the poor father went to every house in the village, but found no one willing to be godfather to his son. So he set off to another village, and on the way he met a man who stopped and said:

"Good-day, my good man; where are you off to?"

"God has given me a child," said the peasant, "to rejoice my eyes in youth, to comfort my old age, and to pray for my soul after death. But I am poor, and no one in our village will stand godfather to him, so I am now on my way to seek a godfather for him elsewhere."

"Let me be godfather," said the stranger.

The peasant was glad, and thanked him, but added:

"And whom shall I ask to be godmother?"

"Go to the town," replied the stranger, "and, in the square, you will see a stone house with shop-windows in the front. At the entrance you will find the tradesman to whom it belongs. Ask him to let his daughter stand godmother to your child."

The peasant hesitated.

"How can I ask a rich tradesman?" said he, "He will despise me, and will not let his daughter come."

"Don't trouble about that. Go and ask. Get everything ready by tomorrow morning, and I will come to the christening."

The poor peasant returned home, and then drove to the town to find the tradesman. He had hardly taken his horse into the yard, when the tradesman himself came out.

"What do you want?" said he.

"Why, sir," said the peasant, "you see God has given me a son to rejoice my eyes in youth, to comfort my old age, and to pray for my soul after death. Be so kind as to let your daughter stand godmother to him."

"And when is the christening?" said the tradesman.

"Tomorrow morning."

"Very well. Go in peace. She shall be with you at Mass tomorrow morning."

The next day the godmother came, and the godfather also, and the infant was baptized. Immediately after the christening the godfather went away. They did not know who he was and never saw him again.

The child grew up to be a joy to his parents. He was strong, willing to work, clever and obedient. When he was ten years old his parents sent him to school to learn to read and write. What others learnt in five years, he learnt in one, and soon there was nothing more they could teach him.

Easter came round, and the boy went to see his godmother, to give her his Easter greeting.

"Father and mother," said he when he got home again, "where does my godfather live? I should like to give him my Easter greeting, too."

And his father answered:

"We know nothing about your godfather, dear son. We often regret it ourselves. Since the day you were christened we have never seen him, nor had any news of him. We do not know where he lives, or even whether he is still alive."

The son bowed to his parents.

"Father and mother," said he, "let me go and look for my godfather. I must find him and give him my Easter greeting."

So his father and mother let him go, and the boy set off to find his godfather.

The boy left the house and set out along the road. He had been walking for several hours when he met a stranger who stopped him and said:

"Good-day to you, my boy. Where are you going?"

And the boy answered:

"I went to see my godmother and to give her my Easter greeting, and when I got home I asked my parents where my godfather lives, that I might go and greet him also. They told me they did not know. They said he went away as soon as I was christened, and they know nothing about him, not even if he be still alive. But I wished to see my godfather, and so I have set out to look for him."

Then the stranger said: "I am your godfather."

The boy was glad to hear this. After kissing his godfather three times for an Easter greeting, he asked him:

"Which way are you going now, godfather? If you are coming our way, please come to our house; but if you are going home, I will go with you."

"I have no time now," replied his godfather, "to come to your house. I have business in several villages, but I shall return home again tomorrow. Come and see me then."

"But how shall I find you, godfather?"

"When you leave here, go straight towards the rising sun, and you will come to a forest; going through the forest you will come to a glade. When you reach this glade sit down and rest awhile, and look around you and see what happens. On the further side of the forest you will find a garden, and in it a house with a golden roof. This is my home. Go up to the gate, and I will myself be there to meet you." And having said this the godfather disappeared from his godson's sight.

The boy did as his godfather had told him. He walked eastward until he reached a forest, and there he came to a glade, and in the midst of the glade he saw a pine tree to a branch of which was tied a rope supporting a heavy log of oak. Close under this log stood a wooden trough filled with honey. Hardly had the boy had time to wonder why honey was placed there and why the log hung above it, when he heard a crackling in the wood and saw some bears approaching: a she-bear, followed by a yearling and three tiny cubs. The she-bear, sniffing the air, went straight to the trough, the cubs following her. She thrust her muzzle into the honey, and called the cubs to do the same. They scampered up and began to eat. As they did so, the log which the she-bear had moved aside with her head, swung away a little and, returning, gave the cubs a push. Seeing this the she-bear shoved the log away with her paw. It swung further out and returned more forcibly, striking one cub on the back and another on the head. The cubs ran away howling with pain, and the mother, with a growl, caught the log in her forepaws and raising it above her head, flung it away. The log flew high in the air, and the yearling, rushing to the the trough, pushd his muzzle into the trough and began to suck noisily. The others also drew near, but they had not reached the trough when the log, flying back, struck the the yearling on the head and killed him. The mother growled louder than before and seizing the log, flung it from her with all her might. It flew higher than the branch it was tied to; so high that the rope slackened; and the she-bear returned to the trough, and the little cubs after her. The log flew higher and higher, then stopped, and began to fall. The nearer it came the faster it swung, and at last, at full speed, it crashed down on her head. The she-bear rolled over, her legs jerked, and she died. The cubs ran away into the forest.

The boy watched all this in surprise, and then continued his way. Leaving the forest, he came upon a large garden in the midst of which stood a lofty palace with a golden roof. At the gate stood his godfather, smiling. He welcomed his godson, and let him through the gateway into the garden. The boy had never dreamed of such beauty and delight as surrounded him in that place.

Then his godfather led him into the palace, which was even more beautiful inside than out. The godfather showed the boy through all the rooms; each brighter and finer than the other, but at last they came to one door that was sealed up.

"You see this door," said he, "It is not locked, but only sealed. It can be opened, but I forbid you to open it. You may live here, and go where you please, and enjoy all the delights of my palace. My only command is—do not open that door! But should you ever do so, remember what you saw in the forest."

Having said this the godfather went away. The godson remained in the palace, and life there was so bright and joyful that he thought he had only been there three hours when he had really lived there thirty years. When thirty years had gone by the godson happened to be passing the sealed door one day, and he wondered why his godfather had forbidden him to enter that room.

"I'll just look in and see what is there," thought he, and he gave the door a push. The seals gave way, the door opened, and the godson entering saw a hall more lofty and beautiful than all the others, and in the midst of it a throne. He wandered about the hall for a while, and then mounted the steps and seated himself upon the throne. As he sat there he noticed a scepter leaning against the throne, and took in his hand. Hardly had he done so when the hall walls suddenly disappeared. The godson looked around, and saw the whole world, and all that men were doing in it. He looked in front, and saw the sea with ships sailing on it. He looked to the right, and saw where strange heathen people lived. He looked to the left, and saw where men who were Christians, but not Russians, lived. He looked round, and on the fourth side, he saw Russian people, like himself.

"I will look," said he, "and see what is happening at home, and whether the harvest is good."

He looked towards his father's fields and saw the sheaves standing in shocks. He began counting them to see whether there was much corn, when he noticed a peasant driving in a cart. It was night, and the godson thought it was his father coming to cart the corn by night. But as he looked he recognized Vasili Kudryashov, the thief, driving onto the field and beginning to load the sheaves on to his cart. This made the godson angry and he called out:

"Father, the sheaves are being stolen from our field!"

His father, who was out with the horses in the night-pasture, woke up.

"I dreamt the sheaves were being stolen," said he. "I will just ride down and see."

So he got on a horse and rode out to the field. Finding Vasili there, he called together other peasants to help him, and Vasili was beaten, bound, and taken to prison.

Then the godson looked at the town, where his godmother lived. He saw that she was now married to a tradesman. She lay asleep, and her husband rose and went to his mistress. The godson shouted to her:

"Get up, get up, your husband has taken to evil ways."

The godmother jumped up and dressed, and finding out where her husband was, she shamed and beat his mistress, and drove him away.

Then the godson looked for his mother, and saw her lying asleep in her cottage. And a thief crept into the cottage and began to break open the chest in which she kept her things. The mother awoke and screamed, and the robber, seizing an axe, swung it over his head to kill her.

The godson could not refrain from hurling the scepter at the robber. It struck him upon the temple, and killed him on the spot.

As soon as the godson had killed the robber, the walls closed and the hall became just as it had been before.

Then the door opened and the godfather entered, and coming up to his godson he took him by the hand and led him down from the throne.

"You have not obeyed my command," said he. "You did one wrong thing when you opened the forbidden door; another, when you mounted the throne and took my scepter into your hands; and you have now done a third wrong, which has much increased the evil in the world. Had you sat here an hour longer, you would have ruined half mankind."

Then the godfather led his godson back to the throne, and took the scepter in his hand; and again the walls fell asunder and all things become visible. And the godfather said:

"See what you have done to your father. Vasili has now been a year in prison, and has come out having learnt every kind of wickedness, and has become quite incorrigible. See, he has stolen two of your father's horses, and he is now setting fire to his barn. All this you brought upon your father."

The godson saw his father's barn breaking into flames, but his godfather shut off the sight from him, and told him to look another way.

"Here is your godmother's husband," he said. "It is a year since he left his wife, and now he goes after other women. His former mistress has sunk to still lower depths. Sorrow has driven his wife to drink. That's what you have done to your godmother."

The godfather shut off this also, and showed the godson his father's house. There he saw his mother weeping for her sins, repenting and saying:

"It would have been better had the robber killed me that night. I should not have sinned so heavily."

"That," said the godfather, "is what you have done to your mother."

He shut this off also, and pointed downwards, and the godson saw two wardens holding the robber in front of a prisonhouse.

And the godfather said:

"This man had murdered ten men. He should have expiated his sins himself, but by killing him you have taken his sins on yourself. Now you must answer for all his sins. That is what you have done to yourself. The she-bear pushed the log aside once, and disturbed her cubs; she pushed it again and killed her yearling; she pushed it a third time, and was killed herself. You have done the same. Now I give you thirty years to go into the world and atone for the robber's sins. If you do not atone for them, you will have to take his place."

"How am I to atone for his sins?" asked the godson.

And the godfather answered:

"When you have rid the world of as much evil as you have brought into it, you will have atoned both for your own sins and for those of the robber."

"How can I destroy evil in the world?" the godson asked.

"Go out," replied the godfather, "and walk straight towards the rising sun. After a time you will come to a field with some men in it. Notice what they are doing, and teach them what you know. Then go on and note what you see. On the fourth day you will come to a forest. In the midst of the forest is a cell, and in the cell lives a hermit. Tell him all that has happened. He will teach you what to do. When you have done all he tells you, you will have atoned for your own and the robber's sins."

And, having said this, the godfather led his godson out of the gate.

The godson went his way, and as he went he thought:

"How am I to destroy evil in the world? Evil is destroyed by banishing evil men, keeping them in prison, or putting them to death. How then am I to destroy evil without taking the sins of others upon myself?"

The godson pondered over it for a long time, but could come to no conclusion. He went on until he came to a field where corn was growing thick and good and ready for the reapers. The godson saw that a little calf had got in among the corn. Some men who were at hand saw it, and mounting their horses they chased it backwards and forwards through the corn. Each time the calf was about to come out of the corn, someone rode up and the calf got frightened and turned back again, and they all galloped after it, trampling down the corn. On the road stood a woman crying.

"They will chase my calf to death." she said.

And the godson said to the peasants:

"What are you doing? Come out of the cornfield. all of you, and let the woman call her calf."

The men did so; and the women came to the edge of the cornfield and called to the calf. "Come along, Browny, come along," she said. The calf pricked up its ears, listened awhile, and then ran towards the woman of its own accord, and hid its head in her skirts, almost knocking her over. The men were glad, the woman was glad, and so was the little calf.

The godson went on, and he thought:

"Now I see that evil spreads evil. The more people try to drive away evil, the more the evil grows. Evil, it seems, cannot be destroyed by evil; but in what way it can be destroyed, I do not know. The calf obeyed its mistress and so all went well; but if it had not obeyed her, how could we have got it out of the field?"

The godson pondered again, but came to no conclusion, and continued his way.

He went on until he came to a village. At the farthest end he stopped and asked leave to stay the night. The woman of the house was there alone, house-cleaning, and she let him in. The godson entered, and taking his seat upon the brick oven he watched what the woman was doing. He saw her finish scrubbing the room and begin scrubbing the table. Having done this, she began wiping the table with a dirty cloth. She wiped it from side to side—but it did not come clean. The soiled cloth left streaks of dirt. Then she wiped it the other way. The first streaks disappeared, but others came in their place. Then she wiped it from one end to the other, but again the same thing happened. The soiled cloth messed the table; when one streak was wiped off another was left on. The godson watched for a while in silence, and then said:

"What are you doing, mistress?"

"Don't you see I'm cleaning up for the holiday? Only I can't manage this table, it won't come clean. I'm quite tired out."

"You should rinse your cloth," said the godson, "before you wipe the table with it."

The woman did so, and soon had the table clean.

"Thank you for telling me," said she.

In the morning he took leave of the woman and went on his way. After walking a good while, he came to the edge of a forest. There he saw some peasants who were making wheel-rims of bent wood. Coming nearer, the godson saw that the men were going round and round, but could not bend the wood.

He stood and looked on, and noticed that the block, to which the piece of wood was fastened, was not fixed, but as the men moved round it went round too. Then the godson said:

"What are you doing, friends?"

"Why, don't you see, we are making wheel-rims. We have twice steamed the wood, and are quite tired out, but the wood will not bend."

"You should fix the block, friends," said the godson, "or else it goes round when you do."

The peasants took his advice and fixed the block, and then the work went on merrily.

The godson spent the night with them, and then went on. He walked all day and night, and just before dawn he came upon some drovers encamped for the night, and lay down beside them. He saw that they had got all their cattle settled, and were trying to light a fire. They had taken dry twigs and lighted them, but before the twigs had time to burn up, they smothered them with damp brushwood. The brushwood hissed, and the fire smoldered and went out. Then the drovers brought more dry wood, lit it, and again put on the brushwood—and again the fire went out. They struggled with it for a long time, but could not get the fire to burn. Then the godson said:

"Do not be in such a hurry to put on the brushwood. Let the dry wood burn up properly before you put any on. When the fire is well alight you can put on as much as you please."

The drovers followed his advice. They let the fire burn up fiercely before adding the brushwood, which then flared up so that they soon had a roaring fire.

The godson remained with them for a while and then continued his way. He went on, wondering what the three things he had seen might mean; but he could not fathom them.

The godson walked the whole of that day, and in the evening came to another forest. There he found a hermit's cell, at which he knocked. "Who is there?" asked a voice from within.

"A great sinner," replied the godson, "I must atone for another's sins as well as my own." The hermit hearing this came out.

*(Concluded in next issue)*

# A Forerunner of the New Race

### By Sri Tara Mata

*Sri Tara Mata, a faithful disciple of Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda for forty-seven years, was editor-in-chief of Self-Realization Fellowship/Yogoda Satsanga Society of India publications, and a member of the SRF/YSS Board of Directors. Not long after she had met Sri Sri Paramahansa Yoganandaji in 1924, she wrote the following article about a "man" who was blessed with the experience of cosmic consciousness. Though she humbly avoided identification with the person mentioned, the experiences Sri Tara Mata describes were her own.*

Those who have read Dr. R. M. Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness* and Edward Carpenter's *Toward Democracy** know that these authors believe that cosmic consciousness is a natural faculty of man, and that a future race of men on this earth will be born with this faculty well developed, and not merely latent as it is now. Bucke's theory is that, just as man advanced from the state of simple consciousness, which he shared with the animal kingdom, into a state of self-consciousness, peculiar to man alone, and marked by the development of language, so he must inevitably come into a higher state of consciousness, distinguished by a cosmic or universal understanding.

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*Richard Maurice Bucke, a physician, attended Walt Whitman during the latter part of his life, after the great poet had been stricken (in 1873) with paralysis. Dr. Bucke later wrote a biography

Bucke maintains that the increasing number of people who have attained some degree of cosmic consciousness in the past few centuries is proof that these persons constitute the vanguard or forerunners of the new race. Among those whom Bucke believes to have had the cosmic sense more or less well developed (in recent centuries) are St. John of the Cross, Francis Bacon, Jakob Boehme, Blaise Pascal, Spinoza, Swedenborg, William Blake, William Wordsworth, Alexander Pushkin, Honore de Balzac, Emerson, Tennyson, Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Edward Carpenter, and Ramakrishna.

Besides these famous men, it is doubtless true that many hundreds of men and women in each century, unknown to fame, have been exalted to some degree of cosmic consciousness. There is no doubt in my mind that the message of Self-Realization Fellowship (founded by Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda) in this century has been the means by which hundreds and perhaps thousands of students throughout

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of Whitman, the first of importance to describe him as a mystical superman; and edited several volumes of Whitman's letters and notes.

The English author Edward Carpenter, after graduation from Cambridge, took holy orders and served as curate in a Cambridge church. He was greatly disturbed by the existing social and religious order, and with the reading in 1868 or 1869 of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and *Democratic Vistas*, his view of life completely changed. He found his sympathies "flowing . . . westward across the Atlantic." In 1874 he left Cambridge to seek a life more in conformity with nature, but had to pass a number of years in uncongenial surroundings. His first successful literary work was *Towards Democracy*, which attracted the attention of many advanced thinkers. In 1884, the year following its publication, he went to the United States, where he spent some time with Whitman and met Lowell, Emerson, and others. After his return to England he became something of a recluse, but continued until his death to be sought out by persons of kindred spirit.

the world have achieved, through the meditation practices taught them, a glimpse of divine consciousness. Some few students have gone farther and attained very high illumination. Here we have an example of how the cosmic sense is being developed in larger and larger numbers, paving the way for the great race of the future.

One selection from Bucke's book is well worth quoting here:

"In contact with the flux of cosmic consciousness all religions known and named today will be melted down. The human soul will be revolutionized. Religion will absolutely dominate the race. It will not be believed and disbelieved.

"It will not be a part of life, belonging to certain hours, times, occasions. It will not be in sacred books nor in the mouths of priests. It will not dwell in churches and meetings and forms and days. Its life will not be in prayers, hymns nor discourses. It will not depend on special revelations, on the words of gods who came down to teach, nor on any Bible or Bibles. It will have no mission to save men from their sins or to secure them entrance to heaven. It will not teach a future immortality nor future glories, for immortality and all glory will exist here and now. The evidence of immortality will live in every heart as sight in every eye. Doubt of God and of eternal life will be as impossible as is now doubt of existence; the evidence of each will be the same. Religion will govern every minute of every day of all life. Churches, priests, forms, creeds, prayers, all agents, all intermediaries between the individual man and God will be permanently replaced by direct unmistakable intercourse. Sin will no longer exist nor will salvation be desired. Men will not worry about death or a future, about the kingdom of heaven, about what may come with and after the cessation of the life of the present body. Each soul will feel and know itself to be immortal, will feel and know that the entire universe with all its good and with all its beauty is for it and belongs to it forever. The world peopled by men possessing cosmic consciousness will be as far removed from the world of today as this is from the world as it was before the advent of self-consciousness. . . . This new race is in the act of being born from us, and in the near future it will occupy and possess the earth."

### A Definite Way to Contact God

The fact that there is a technique, such as Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India) teaches, whereby cosmic consciousness can be attained, is in itself proof that this higher sense is indeed an inherent faculty of all men, needing but the necessary training to call it forth. Most people believe that divine knowledge come to only a few chosen ones, and that the average man can approach no nearer to God than his "faith" will take him. Realization that there is a definite *way* to contact God, a technique usable by all men in all circumstances, has come as such a liberating shock to a number of Self-Realization (Yogoda) students that they feel they have undergone a new birth.

I have one such case in mind—a man who, as soon as hehad heard the Self-Realization/Yogoda message, was swept up into cosmic consciousness. He is the only such person, aside from Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, whom I myself have known, though I have heard or read of a number of Self-Realization students who have had a more or less similar experience.

This man was possessed of intense religious faith and aspiration. Though well read in the sacred scriptures of the world, especially those of India, he knew that this intellectual knowledge was barren and stony; it did not feed the soul-hunger within him. He did not wish merely to read about spiritual food, but to taste it. Under the even tenor of his days there yawned a black abyss of despair—despair that he was unworthy of any direct contact with God, since no such experience was given to him. He finally came to doubt, not God, but the possibility that he would ever be able to have more than an intellectual comprehension of Him. This conviction struck at the roots of his life, and made it seem a worthless and meaningless thing.

Into this dark night of his soul came the light of Self-Realization. After attending a few of the public lectures by Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, and before taking the class lessons, this man felt the heavy weight of despair lifting from his heart. Returning to his home one night from the last of the public lectures, he was conscious of a great peace within himself. He felt that in some deep fundamental way, he had become a different person. An impulse urged him to look into a mirror in his room, that he might see the new man. There he saw, not his own face, but the face of Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, whose lecture he had attended that evening. The floodgates of joy broke in his soul; he was inundated with waves of indescribable ecstasy. Words that had been merely words to him before—bliss, immortality, eternity, truth, divine love—became, in the twinkling of an eye, the core of his being, the essence of his life, the only possible reality. Realization that these deep, everlasting founts of joy existed in every heart, that this immortal life underlay all the mortality of humanity, that this eternal, all-inclusive love enveloped and supported and guided every particle, every atom of creation, burst upon him with a surety, a divine certainty that caused his whole being to pour forth in a flood of praise and gratitude.

He *knew*, not with his mind alone, but with his heart and soul, with every cell and molecule of his body. The sublime splendor and joy of this discovery were so vast that he felt that centuries, millenniums, countless eons of suffering were as nothing, as less than nothing, if by such means this bliss could be obtained. Sin, sorrow, death—these were but words now, words without meaning, words swallowed up by joy as minnows by the seven seas.

## Physiological Changes

He was aware, during this first period of illumination and during the weeks which followed, of a number of physiological changes within himself. The most striking was what seemed a rearrangement of molecular structure in his brain, or the opening up of new cell-territory there. Ceaselessly, day and night, he was conscious of this work going on. It seemed as though a kind of electrical drill was boring out new cellular thought-channels. This phenomenon is strong proof of Bucke's theory that cosmic consciousness is a natural faculty of man, for it gives evidence that the brain cells which are connected with this faculty are already present in man, although inactive or non-functioning in the majority of human beings at the present time.

Another important change was felt in his spinal column. The whole spine seemed turned into iron for several weeks, so that, when he sat to meditate on God, he felt anchored forever, able to sit in one place eternally without motion or consciousness of any bodily function. At times an influx of superhuman strength invaded him, and he felt that he was carrying the whole universe on his shoulders. The elixir of life, the nectar of immortality, he felt flowing in his veins as an actual, tangible force. It seemed like a quicksilver, or a sort of electrical, fluid light throughout his body.

During the weeks of illumination, he felt no need of food or sleep. But he conformed his outward life to the pattern of his household, and ate and slept when his family did. All food seemed pure spirit to him, and in sleep he was pillowed on the "everlasting arms," awakening to a joy past all words, past all powers of description.

He had previously suffered from chronic catarrh; now his body was purged of all sickness. His family and friends were aware of a great change in his appearance and manner; his face shone with a radiant light; his eyes were pools of joy. Strangers spoke to him, irresistibly drawn by a strange sympathy; on the streetcar, children would come over to sit on his lap, asking him to visit them.

The whole universe was to him bathed in a sea of love; he said to himself many times, "Now at last I know what *love* is! This is God's love, shaming the noblest human affection. Eternal love, unconquerable love, all-satisfying love!" He knew beyond all possibility or thought of doubt that Love creates and sustains the universe, and that all created things, human or sub-human, were destined to discover this Love, this immortal bliss that was the very essence of life. He felt his mind expand, his understanding reach out, endlessly widening, growing, touching everything in the universe, binding all things, all thoughts to himself. He was "center everywhere, circumference nowhere."

### The Atom-Dance of Nature

The air that he breathed was friendly, intimate, conscious of life. He felt that all the world was "home" to him, that he could never feel strange or alien to any place again; that the mountains, the sea, the distant lands which he had never seen, would be as much his own as the home of his boyhood. Everywhere he looked, he saw the "atom-dance" of nature; the air was filled with myriad moving pinpricks of light.

During these weeks, he went about his daily duties as usual, but with a hitherto unknown efficiency and speed. Typed papers flew off his machine, completed without error in a fourth of his customary time. Fatigue was unknown to him; his work seemed like child's play, happy and carefree. Conversing in person or over the telephone with his clients, his inward joy covered every action and circumstance, with a cosmic significance, for to him these men, this telephone, this table, this voice was God, God manifesting Himself in another of His fascinating disguises.

In the midst of his work, he would suddenly be freshly overwhelmed by the goodness of God who had given him this incredible, unspeakable happiness. His breath would stop completely at such times; the awe which he felt would be accompanied by an absolute stillness within and without. Underlying all his consciousness was a sense of immeasurable and unutterable gratitude; a longing for others to know the joy which lay within them; but most of all, a divine knowledge, past all human comprehension, that all was well with the world, that everything was leading to the goal of cosmic consciousness, immortal bliss.

This state of illumination was present with the man for about two months and then gradually wore away. It has never returned with all its pristine force, though certain features, especially the sense of divine peace and joy, return whenever he practices the Self-Realization/Yogoda meditation techniques.

We can well imagine, with Doctor Bucke, that a race of men, possessing as a normal and permanent faculty this sense of cosmic consciousness, would soon turn the earth into a paradise, a planet fit for Christs and Buddhas, a polestar for the wheeling universe.

# Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

*Rendered into English by Edward Fitz-Gerald*

SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION
BY SRI SRI PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

*The "Rubaiyat" as interpreted by Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda appeared serially in "Self-Realization Magazine" thirty-odd years ago. Some time after, Paramahansaji reviewed the manuscript, making refinements and enlarging on various points. "Yogoda Magazine" is pleased to publish his revised manuscript in this and future issues.*

## Introduction

Long ago in India I met a hoary Persian poet who told me that the poetry of Persia often has two meanings, one inner and one outer. I remember the great satisfaction I derived from his explanations of the twofold significance of several Persian poems.

One day as I was deeply concentrated on the pages of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, I suddenly beheld the walls of its outer meanings crumble away, and the vast inner fortress of golden spiritual treasures stood open to my gaze.

Profound spiritual treatises by some mysterious divine law do not disappear from the earth even after centuries of misunderstanding, as in the case of the *Rubaiyat*. Not even in Persia is all of Omar Khayyam's deep philosophy understood in its entirety, as I have tried to present it.

Because of the hidden spiritual foundation of the *Rubaiyat* it has withstood the ravages of time and the misinterpretations of many translators, remaining a perpetual mansion of wisdom for truth loving and solace-seeking souls.

In Persia Omar Khayyam has always been considered a highly advanced mystical teacher, and his *Rubaiyat* revered as an inspired Sufi scripture. "The first great Sufi writer was Omar Khayyam," writes Professor Charles F. Horne in the *Introduction to the Rubaiyat*, which appears in Vol. VIII of the "The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East" series (Parke, Austin & Lipscomb, London, 1917). "Unfortunately, Omar, by a very large number of Western readers, has come to be regarded as a rather erotic pagan poet, a drunkard interested only in wine and earthly pleasure. This is typical of the confusion that exists on the entire subject of Sufism. The West has insisted on judging Omar from its own viewpoint. But if we are to understand the East at all, we must try to see how its own people look upon its writings. It comes as a surprise to many Westerners when they are told that in Persia itself there is no dispute whatever about Omar's verses and their meaning. He is accepted quite simply as a great religious poet.

"What then becomes of all his passionate praise of wine and love? These are merely the thoroughly established metaphors of Sufism; the wine is the joy of the spirit, and the love is the rapturous devotion to God....

"Omar rather veiled than displayed his knowledge. That such a man would be regarded by the Western world as an idle reveler is absurd. Such wisdom united to such shallowness is self-contradictory."

Omar and other Sufi poets used popular similes and pictured the ordinary joys of life so that the worldly man could compare those ordinary joys of mundane life with the superior joys of the spiritual life. To the man who habitually drinks wine to temporarily forget the sorrows and unbearable trials of his life, Omar offers a more delightful nectar of enlightenment and divine ecstasy which has the power, when used by man, to obliterate his woes for all time. Surely Omar did not go through the labor of writing so many exquisite verses merely to tell people to escape sorrow by drugging their senses with wine!

J. B. Nicolas, whose French translation of 464 *rubaiyat* (quatrains) appeared in 1867, a few years after Edward Fitz-Gerald's first edition, opposed Fitz-Gerald's views that Omar was a materialist. Fitz-Gerald refers to this fact in the introduction to his own second edition, as follows:

"M. Nicolas, whose edition has reminded me of several things, and instructed me in others, does not consider Omar to be the material epicurean that I have literally taken him for, but a mystic, shadowing the Diety under the figure of wine, wine-bearer, etc., as Hafiz is supposed to do; in short, a Sufi poet like Hafiz and the rest....As there is some traditional presumption, and certainly the opinion of some learned men, in favor of Omar's being a Sufi—even something of a saint—those who please may so interpret his wine and cup-bearer."

Omar distinctly states that wine symbolizes the intoxication of divine love and joy. Many of his stanzas are so purely spiritual that hardly any material meanings can be drawn from them, as for instance in quatrains XLIV, LX, and LXVI.

With the help of a Persian scholar, I translated the original *Rubaiyat* into English. But I found that, though literally translated, they lacked the fiery spirit of Khayyam's original. After I compared that translation with Fitz-Gerald's I realized that Fitz-Gerald had been divinely inspired to catch exactly in gloriously musical English words the soul of Omar's writings.

Therefore I decided to interpret the inner hidden meaning of Omar's verses from Fitz-Gerald's translation rather than from my own or any other that I had read.

Fitz-Gerald prepared five different editions of the *Rubaiyat.* For my interpretion I have chosen the first, as one's first inspiration—being spontaneous, natural, and sincere—is most often the deepest and purest expression.

As I worked on the spiritual interpretion of the *Rubaiyat*, it took me into an endless labyrinth of truth, until I was rapturously lost in wonderment. The veiling of Khayyam's metaphysical and practical philosophy in these verses reminds me of "The Revelation of St. John the Divine." The *Rubaiyat* may rightly be called "The Revelation of Omar Khayyam."

* * *

*Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night*
*Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:*
*And Lo, the Hunter of the East has caught*
*The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.*

### Spiritual Interpretation

The inner Silence sings:

"Awake! Forsake the sleep of ignorance, for the dawn of wisdom has come. Hurl the hard stone of spiritual discipline that breaks the bowl of dark unknowing, putting to flight the pale stars of mock-lustered material desires.

"Behold, the Eastern Wisdom, the Hunter and Destroyer of delusion, has caught the proud minaret of the kingly soul in a noose of Light, dispelling its darkness."

I have been inspired further to interpret this introductory quatrain as Omar's personal clarion call to the spiritually sleeping:

"O inhabitants of the City of Delusion, sleep no more! The sunlight of my awakening message of mystic wisdom has arrived. Learn how to use the hard stone of spiritual discipline to break the bowl of your dark ignorance, dashing from its hold the desire for momentarily attractive material pleasures.

"Behold with envy how the Hunter of Wisdom has been searching out and gathering the lofty, kingly, spiritually advanced devotees of Truth, encompassing their souls with a halo of the everlasting Light of Freedom."

### Practical Application

Most people, though apparently awake, are really asleep in delusion. Pursued by the compelling commands of their hounding habits, they have not yet been awakened by wisdom to walk its pleasant pathways. Where life is in danger for lack of watchfulness, it is not safe to sleep. So it is unwise to slumber in the dark doorways of evil habits, which invite the danger of possible death to wisdom and true happiness.

The ordinary man earns a living, eats three times a day, amuses himself with trivial entertainments, remaining engrossed in the mechanical performance of material duties without ever awakening to the importance of understanding the purpose of life: attaining true happiness and sharing it with others. The wise man gives up false pride in self-perfection, the thought that "I am all right as I am." Using the net of introspection, he catches delusion and destroys it. Forsake the slumber of ignorant habits and awaken wisdom by performing those good habits which alone can free life from danger and crown it with lasting happiness.

To be drunk with the daily round of haunting useless habits, to be negatively the same every day for years, is a wasted existence. Destroy false pride. Awaken the soul and remain ever wakeful, striving each day to be different and better in all ways. Your soul was not meant to be a prisoner of passion, sleeping behind bars of ignorance. Jerk yourself from the stupor of sloth; race foward with progressive activities, and catch success in the net of soul creativity.

Forsake spiritual lethargy and melancholia. Bask in the light of meditative peace and Self-realization, which destroys false pride of material existence and banishes inner soul gloom.

# A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE *BHAGAVAD-GITA*

By Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

## *Chapter XV, Stanza 15*

*I am seated in the heart of all beings; and from Me come memory and knowledge, as well as their loss. Verily I am That which has to be understood in the Vedas; indeed, I am the Veda-Knower and the Author of the Vedanta.*

Man, in his dream consciousness, perceives a dream and uses his memory and knowledge, and the likes and dislikes of his heart, to play the drama of dreams. But when he ceases to dream, his dream experiences vanish.

Similarly, through His power of *maya* God hypnotizes deluded man to use his perception, memory, and heart to play the drama of dream material existence. A person becomes attached to his dream experiences because he does not realize that he is only an actor speaking the lines given him; the Lord is the only Playwright.

By ecstasy the devotee tries to get away from the misery-making pairs of opposites of the cosmic dream and to awaken in God. He realizes that the limiting dreams of human perception, memory, and the entangling emotions of the heart, though they come from God, can be dissolved by attaining his true and divine identity.

The ordinary person, immersed in his dream existence, remains in ignorance, deeming himself to be a physical man. The emancipated devotee, by the awakened memory of his Divinity, dismisses the dreams of human perception, of mortal likes and dislikes. The yogi who is one with omnipresent God finds Him seated in all men in the heart, memory, and powers of perception, confusing mortals through these means. He also perceives God dissolving those states of consciousness in Self-realized souls.

## God is the Essence of All Knowledge

God is the Essence of All Knowledge. He is the Source of all the wisdom in the *Vedas* and in the *Vedanta* (*Upanishads*). He directs the processes of all forms of human cognition; He is the consciousness of all sentient beings: angels, deities, yogis, ordinary men, goblins, animals and all other forms of life.

The Lord knows all the states of the soul as it descends from Spirit into the human form. He knows all the perceptions of the body-bound soul, all its sensory and motor experiences during the state of delusion. God also knows the perceptions of a soul as it climbs back toward His liberating presence.

## The Lord's Omnipresent Awareness

As all the waves dance on the bosom of the sea, so all perceptive processes of all sentient creatures occur within God, within His unbroken awareness. That is why

Jesus said of sparrows that "not one of them is forgotten before God."* The Infinite Spirit is conscious of all the perceptions and vibrations going on in the dream ocean of His being.

Divine men feel the Lord as centered in the hearts of all, and perceive human memory and cognition as originating in Him. Evil men, through wrong actions, cannot see God in the hearts of all. They impair even their ordinary memory and powers of perception, degrading their human status, as well as forgetting the Divine Presence within them.

### *Chapter XV, Stanza 16*

*There are two Being (Purushas) in the cosmos, the destructible and the indestructible. The creatures are the destructible, the Kutastha is indestructible.*

This stanza refers to *Prakriti*, ever-changing Cosmic Nature, and her host of creatures; and to *Kutastha* or the changeless Divine Intelligence that informs the universe.

### *Chapter XV, Stanza 17*

*But there exists Another, the Highest Being, the supreme God. As the Eternal Lord He permeates the three worlds and upholds them.*

### God is not Revealed By Nature

The *Vedas* speak of *Sat-Tat-Aum*, which in the Christian Bible is called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The preceding stanza of the *Gita* mentioned the *Aum* aspect (*Prakriti* or the invisible vibratory force, the Holy Ghost) and the *Tat* aspect (*Kutastha* or the Son the

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*Luke 12:6.

Christ Consciousness in creation.) Stanza 17 refers to the Father or *Sat* aspect of Reality. He is the Ultimate Self, the Supreme Spirit, the transcendental Cause of all. Although He is immanent in creation, He is not revealed by Nature or known by man until the devotee overpasses the vibratory realms of changefulness.

The "three worlds" are the physical, the astral, and the ideational.

### *Chapter XV, Stanza 18-19-20*

*I (the Lord) am beyond the perishable (Prakriti) and am also higher than the imperishable (Kutastha). Therefore, in the worlds and in the Vedas (in the intuitive perception of liberated beings) I am proclaimed Purushottama, the Uttermost Being.*

*He who, freed from delusion, knows Me as the Supreme Spirit obtains omniscience. He worships Me with his whole being.*

*Thus, O Sinless One (Arjuna), have I taught you this profound wisdom. Understanding it, a man becomes a sage, one who has fulfilled all his duties.*

(End of Chapter XV)

# Letter from a Disciple

### By Sri Sri Gyanamata

(Sri Gyanamata (1869-1951) was the most spiritually advanced woman disciple of Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, whom she met in Seattle in 1924. She took the vows of a sannyasini of the Self-Realization—Yogoda Order in 1932.)

Divine Master:

My mind works so slowly. It is just this moment that I see the dreadful thing I seem to you to have said. I express myself so badly at times; how could you possibly understand me! I said that my prayer to you was to grant me sufficient length of days, and quietness of days, that I might feel God as Bliss before I leave the body. This sounds as if I wanted things made easier for me, that I wanted to be left alone to meditate! Oh, how could I ever have said such a thing—put words together that do not at all express my meaning!

My meaning was that since you are God in man made manifest, and that by your divine power you have healed me and lengthened my days, you would by the same divine power, the power of your meditation, sufficiently lengthen them, and by your vibrations breathe quietness into my mind and life, that I might see Him before I die. But it sounded—what I wrote—as if I had no sooner commenced to work for you a little than I became tired and complaining. Oh, dreadful thought! I would die at any moment for you or your work—what does my puny meditation matter! Please permit me to do anything for you that is possible.

And, oh, please give me a sign that you forgive my stupidity—it was nothing worse. My heart is broken that I even seemed to mean such an awful thing.

Please graciously forgive me.

With deepest devotion
GYANAMATA

# Shankaracharya As The Exponent of Vedantic Thought And Culture

## (VIII)

*By* Dr. S. K. Das, M.A. (Cal.), Ph.D. (Lond.)

By way of a clear-cut, terminological as much as a technical, distinction between *Prakriti* and *Svabhava* as the dynamic of Self-realization, Shankara-Vedanta attains unto a vantage-ground, it is to be noted carefully, from which many other kindred problems are easily solved. First and foremost is the discovery, along this route, of the ultimate seat of all moral causality or the exercise of free will. Viewed in this renewed perspective, it becomes crystal clear that all force of Self-determination or autonomy is to be unreservedly vested in man as a spiritual being, as *homo noumenon*, as a citizen of the *mundus intelligibilis*. This is the solution, pure and simple, offered by Shankaracharya, of the seemingly hopeless tangle besetting the "free will" controversy. With penetrative insight he lays his finger on the crucial question thus: "Does this agency or causality belong exclusively to the so-called assemblage of conditions or concomitants of action, *or* does it originate in the sheer volition of a being, independent of this assemblage of conditions, as the sole driving power at the back of mind, along with its accessories?" (Vide Shankaracharya's commentary on the *Kena Upanishad* I.1.) It is by means of the triple stratification of human nature into Life, Mind and Spirit, that Shankara-Vedanta has succeeded in pointing a way out of this maze of controversy into which it is always hurled by average Western writers on this theme, on account of their failure to rise above the plane of mind to which the final appeal must ever be directed. Seldom do they stop to enquire whether the mind is equal to the task of discharging the obligation that is thus thrust upon it. It seems scarcely to have occurred to them that the mind may be, after all, as much mechanical as the sensory apparatus, from which it is assiduously distinquished, and that the predilection for mind, as being non-mechanical or nonmaterialistic, may turn out to be an illusion, or at best, a pious hope. Is not the conceptual possibility of a statics and mechanics of the soul quite competent to cast a justified suspicion and slur on the self-complacent assertion that mind moves matter ("*mens agitat molem*")? It is quite conceivable that by following the line of least resistance, the mind as confronted with equally, powerful but conflicting motives may, like Buridan's ass, shuffle into a mechancial equilibrium—with the same mechanical necessity that simulates the laws of the dynamics of a particle. *Where*, then, does the alleged "free causality" operate and *how*? Anyway, the *prima facie* evidence is against the mind as a claimant for the assumed agency or power. Shankaracharya's handling of this aspect of the problem is equally convincing and forceful. The argument purports to establish "that the mind is not the independent (Self-determining or free) agency it has been painted to be, insofar as it goes forth to court the sharpest pangs of sorrow—which, by the way, is the object of natural aversion and avoidance—despite its being prevented or debarred therefrom. Therefore the enquiry, 'by whom or what is it impelled?'—is a pertinent one" (*loc. cit.*). Hence we must seek for the evidence of free causality in some other direction. It is therefore to be sought for *not* in action that comes about by following the line of least resistance, but in action in the face of the greatest resistance that we find the striking evidence of the aforesaid freedom of man as a spiritual, and not merely of a mind-endowed being. To quote Shankaracharya's final verdict on the point: "hence this is said to be the object of human free will—(the original unregenerate) nature of man, which is conditioned by attachment and aversion, impels a man to pursue a particular line of conduct...while a man who resolutely sets his face against these (instinctive) attachments and aversions, becomes endowed with a spiritual vision and thus is not subjected to nature-necessity and is therefore free or Self-determined. But this negative or inhibitory movement of Self-discipline is not the last word of moral life. According to Shankaracharya, the entire set of natural, outgoing impulses is to be moralised and disciplined once for all by restraining them in the path of rectitude, and thereby pressing them into service of moral life (*Karyna-Karana Sumghatasya Svalbhavena Sarvatah pravrittasya Sanmarge eva nirodhah Kartavyah*—Com. on *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chap. XIII). This single statement, even when taken apart from others of a similar nature and import is quite competent to attest "the expulsive power of a higher affection"—the centre of gravity having been shifted from a merely negative to a positive aspect of spiritual culture and Self-realization. This statement—admittedly the solitary one of its kind—is quite sufficient to justify and confirm the truth of the present-day psycho-andlytic research-formula: "Not repression but sublimation" which serves as the last word of moral life!

Here, again, lies the by-path that leads to the question of *Moksha* or Redemption as the Life Eternal and the disciplines incidental thereto. Redemption *(Moksha)*, according to Shankara-Vedanta, is confessedly the Supreme end, the *ne plus ultra* of human Good, which goes beyond good and evil of ethical valuation and empirical existence; and that is just the reason why at this point individualism is at its strongest, along with distracting varieties of opinicn regarding the Supreme Good, and the accessory means of realizing it. Now, the stable ground that emerges from the shifting scenes of view-points, and to which all alike appeal, as their inevitable pre-supposition, is that the ideal of Vedantic ethics is Self-realization, the attainment of happiness or joy *(ananda)*—which is but the feeling of Self-realizedness as a necessary concomitant thereof. Accordingly, there must needs be differences in the formulation of the Supreme end depending, as they do, on the nature of the Self, as conceived in the different schools of Vedanta. The concept of "end" or "good", together with that of "happiness", as current in the Shankara-Vedanta School, has been very ably defended by the author of the *Vedantaparibhasha* (a monograph on Vedantic Epistomology, or Theory of Knowledge) in the last chapter of the book. Having defined "*prayojanam*" as "that which being known is desired as a mode of one's psychical existence", the author then proceeds to classify "ends" under two heads: "primary" or direct and "secondary" or indirect, happiness and absence of misery being the primary, and all else standing in an accessory or instrumental relation to one of these being the secondary end. "Happiness", as the *Vedantaparibhasha* has placed on record, admits of a two-fold division into relative or empirical and absolute or transcendental: one arising from contact with external objects and admitting of more or less through difference of mental functioning while the other is the *ne plus ultra* of happiness, which is *Brahman* itself. Following this line of reflection Redemption (*Moksha*) is defined as the attainment of *Brahman* which is the very essence of *Ananda* or Blessedness and the consequent negation of all suffering and misery *(anandatmaka Brahmavaptischa mokshah shoka nivrittischa)*!

(To be continued)

# Letters to the Devotees

by Sri Sri Daya Mata

September-October 1971

Dear Ones:

Maya, the veil of delusion, enfolds every particle of creation. All mankind is subject to its influence: no one in this world is wholly exempt. In a sense there is only one real enemy among us all: the common enemy, maya, the cause of ignorance, which is the perpetrator of all ills. Every one of us who desires to draw closer to God must wage a personal, consciously directed battle against this delusive force.

The spiritual principles taught by our beloved Guru act as powerful weapons to help us conquer this great adversary. One of the most effective of these principles is right thought that is free from insincerity, sensuality, and negation about people or things. You have to cultivate the habit of right thinking in all circumstances. This doesn't mean you have to think always like a "Pollyanna," the famous fictitious character who was unrealistically "goody-goody." It is possible to recognize and analyze an imperfection in a condition or person without developing ill feeling or a critical, negative attitude toward life or the individual concerned.

Right speech also is necessary. Master used to say, "Watch the cannonball of your speech, for it can be dangerous when misused or misdirected." Guard against gossiping, criticizing, carrying tales. Do not thus wrongly use the gift of speech. Use it constructively, for uplifting and God-reminding purposes.

Lastly, it is essential to act rightly. Willingly do whatever task is before you. That is important. And no matter what it is, feel that you are serving God through that action; in truth, dear ones, you are.

When we absorb such principles and apply them to the best of our ability they no longer remain mere theological concepts, but become potent factors in winning for us Self-knowledge and Self-unfoldment.

Divine blessings of my soul,

Daya Mata

Sri Sri Daya Mata

November-December 1971

Dear Ones:

As Thanksgiving approaches, I have been thinking how natural it is to be grateful *after* we have received some good. But how rarely do we thank God in advance for His unceasing care and love! More seldom still do we remember to thank Him for the greatest gift He has bestowed upon us: His own Self, hidden within our souls.

It is easy to give our hearts to God when we feel His presence or receive His answer to our prayers. But what a sublimely beautiful expression of faith and love it would be, when we are not aware of any answer, if we thanked Him for silently being with us. Such a grateful attitude would be a true sign of confidence, humility, and surrender.

We forget that the Lord's nature has a personal side. Our blessed Gurudeva, Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, taught us that God receives and responds to the affection and appreciation of His children. And we who are made in his image, how deeply touched and uplifted we are by an expression of genuine gratitude!

Truly humble persons always have a spirit of thanksgiving in their hearts. I remember this so vividly in our beloved Guru; he was the epitome of thoughtfulness and consideration. His gratitude for the slightest service or appreciation was boundless, because he never sought anything for himself; and whatever he received, he saw behind it the love of God. Let us this Thanksgiving make a special effort to implant deeply within our consciousness the thought, and eventually the habit, of being grateful for the hidden as well as the tangible blessings He is ceaselessly bestowing. Then we will learn to say with Paramahansaji:

"My heart is so thankful; it is overcome by His kindness. He has given me everything that I wanted in this life; but above all, he has given Himself. Such gratefulness I feel! He who played hide-and-seek in my heart—He is now ever near. He is hiding behind the audacity of all 'real' manifestations. He is there, waiting for you. There is no need for you to wade through suffering. Run toward Him! The most Beloved is waiting; His arms are open to receive you and spiritualize you."

In the unceasing love of God and Guru,

Daya Mata

Sri Sri Daya Mata

P. S. During this season I would like to share with you the message sent to our members in North America commemorating a holiday known as "Thanksgiving Day." It is the custom in this country to devote a day of thanksgiving to God for all we receive from Him.

*Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper* **(Yogoda)** *to be published in the first issue every year after last day of February.*

## Form IV

*(See Rule 8)*

1. Place of Publication—Yogoda Ashrama, Dakshineswar, Cal.—57
2. Periodicity of its publication— Quarterly
3. Printer's Name— Sri Indra Nath Seth, B.L.
   Nationality— Indian
   Address— Yogoda Satsanga Press,
   Dakshineswar, Cal.—57
4. Publisher's Name Sri Indra Nath Seth, B.L.
   Nationality— Indian
   Address— Yogoda Ashrama, Dakshineswar,
   Calcutta—57
5. Editor's Name— Sri Prabhas Chandra Ghosh
   Nationality— Indian
   Address— Yogoda Ashrama, Dakshineswar,
   Calcutta—57
6. Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners, or shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total capital.

Yogoda Satsanga Society of India
(Self-Realization Fellowship)
Yogoda Ashrama, Dakshineswar
Calcutta—57, West Bengal

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(Sd) Indra Nath Seth

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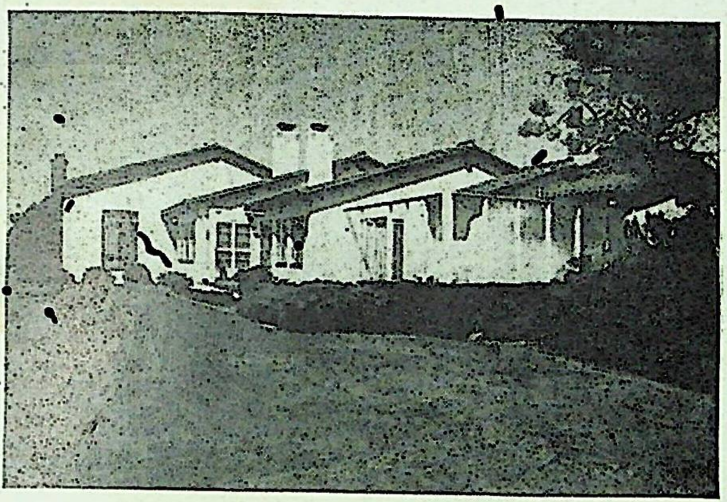
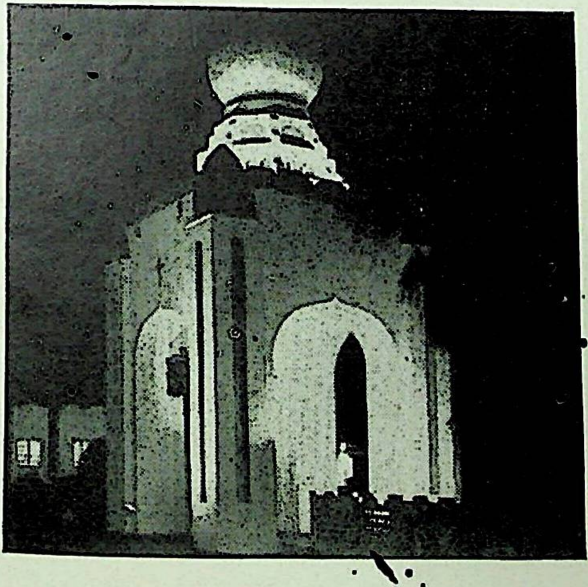
*Translated into French, Spanish, German. Translation into Italian, Japanese, and Dutch now underway.



Self-Realization Fellowship/Yogoda Satsanga Hermitage by the Sea at Encinitas, California, U S.A. It was the gift of Paramahansaji's beloved disciple, Rajarsi Janakananda.



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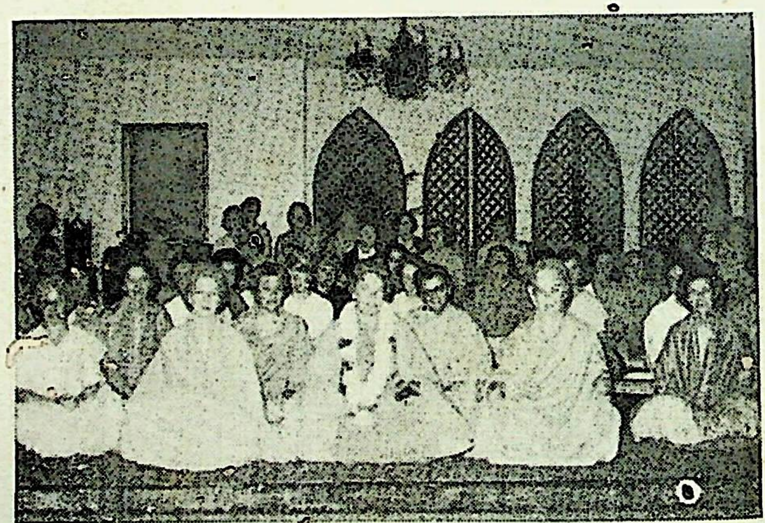
Sri Sri Daya Mataji at Yogoda Satsanga Society of India/Self-Realization Fellowship international headquarters in Los Angeles, California, November, 1971



Mataji with renunciant nuns of the Self-Realization/Yogoda Order in Los Angeles